

Mindy White
House Bill H7858
In Favor of

Dear members of the House Finance Committee,

I'm here today to talk about my friend, Katie Carey.
Katie and I were "mom friends".

We were friends because our girls were friends. We shared long chats in the driveway, occasional dinners with our girls, a beautiful day here and there at Second Beach.

Over the years, our friendship grew. Katie always brought her beautiful, bright smile, her kindness and her sensitivity, along with her sense of humor, to every conversation we had.

Katie was also a wonderful 3rd grade teacher to both of my kids, before we became friends.

Most importantly, she was a magical mom to Charley and Grace. She put everything she had into raising them and giving them every opportunity to have a fantastic childhood. Katie had seemingly endless energy and positivity. She was a person who, in my eyes, **would never give up.**

I don't believe Katie meant to give up the day that she died.
I don't believe she chose to leave her children, family, students and friends.

The Katie I knew would never have left her kids behind.

The Katie I knew needed more time to make a different decision.

I know in my heart that if the Mount Hope bridge had barriers, if it was more challenging than simply stepping over the railing, following her beautiful friend Cara Sanchez (also a teacher at Sowams school), that Katie would still be here fighting.

She would have been here to take pictures before the Junior Prom last month. She and Cara and so many others would still be here for proms and graduations and weddings, and to make pancakes after sleepovers.

As Katie's friend, I know my pain and does not even come close to the pain of the families who have lost a family member to suicide. However, my testimony does show how far and wide the loss of a community member and friend reaches. My daughter and I have been so deeply affected, as we grieve our

friend, and especially as we try to support Katie's daughter. It's been life changing, and we wish for no other communities to experience this pain.

Please pass House Bill H7858. Please make it more difficult to climb over the railing and leave everyone behind. **Please give people more time, so that they can make a different decision, and maybe they will choose to live and fight for another day.**

Thank you for your time.